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TWO PENCE

LEADING TROTSKYIST MURDERED BY GPU

A headless and legless body found in the Seine near Meulan has been identified as that of Rudolph Klement, secretary of the Bureau of the Fourth International, kidnapped in Paris by the G.P.U. last July. In spite of the absence of the head, characteristic marks on the torso enabled Pierre David and Jean Rous, friends of the murdered revolutionist, to identify the body.

The mutilation of the victim can have but one purpose: it is an attempt to hide his identity so that the murderers may produce some impostor claiming to be Klement as a witness at some future frame-up on the lines of the Moscow Trials. The hacked body testifies mutely to the fact that Rudolph Klement resisted the threats his captors made to induce him to follow the example of those who "confessed" in the Moscow Trials, and paid for his loyalty to the workers' revolution with his life.

We print below the statements made by Leon Trotsky not long after it was made known that our comrade was missing.—ED.

1. I received by mail via New York City on August 1 the letter in German signed "Frederic." The letter is dated July 14, without indicating the mailing place. The inner envelope bears in German the words, "for L. D." It is necessary to establish from where and by what route the letter reached New York. Let me add that the marks and lines on the margin which appear on the photostatic copy

were made by me in red pencil upon first reading the letter.

2. Klement began his letters to me with the words: "Dear Comrade L. D." The present letter begins with the salutation: "Mr. Trotsky." This salutation, apparently, should correspond to the hostile tone of the letter which announces the "break in relations."

3. The handwriting of the letter is very similar to the handwriting of Klement. But after more careful comparison with old letters the difference becomes very striking. The handwriting of the last letter is not free, but studied, uneven; individual characters are drawn too carefully, others, on the contrary, are hesitating. Absence of erasures and careful spacing of words, especially at the end of lines show beyond any doubt that the letter has been copied from a draft. Was the letter really written by Klement? I shall not presume to deny it categorically. The handwriting is similar if each character is taken by itself; but the manuscript as a whole lacks naturalness and ease. If this is Klement's handwriting, then it can be so only under very exceptional circumstances; more likely, however, it is *skillful forgery*.

4. From the point of view of the handwriting, the *salutation* and the *signature* draw attention. Clearly they have been written at different times

(different shade of ink) and in a somewhat different hand. There is only one alternative: either the author of the letter hesitated a long time as to what salutation and what signature to use, and resolved the question only after the letter had been finished; or the forger had already samples of the words "Trotsky" and "Frederic" before him from old correspondence while the rest of the letter had to be composed from individual characters. Therefore the greater naturalness and ease in the outline of the salutation and signature.

5. The name "Frederic" as a signature is difficult to explain. It is true that Klement once really used used this pseudonym, but he abandoned it more than two years ago when he grew suspicious that the name had become known to the G.P.U. or the Gestapo. The letters which I have received from Klement in Mexico for the last year and a half have been signed either "Adolf" or "Camille," but never "Frederic." What made Klement return to a long abandoned pseudonym, especially in a letter to me? Here the hypothesis naturally arises that the forgers of the letter had in their possession *old* letters of Klement, signed "Frederic," and that they were not aware of the change in pseudonym. For the investigation this circumstance is of very great importance.

6. In the content of the letter there are something like two levels which are mechanically connected with one another. On one hand, the letter repeats the vile falsifications of the G.P.U. in reference to my connections with fascism, relations with the Gestapo, etc.; on the other hand, it criticizes my policy seemingly from the point of view of the interests of the Fourth International, and tries in this manner to give an explanation for Klement's "turn." This ambiguity threads the entire letter.

7. On the fabricated conversations between Klement and me concerning the admissibility of "temporary concessions to fascist heads for the sake of the proletarian revolution," the letter represents only a belated repetition of corresponding "confessions" at the Moscow trials. "Frederic" does not even attempt to introduce any vital, concrete feature into the Moscow frame-up. More than that, he declares simply that the "bloc" with fascism was concluded on "a basis not altogether clear to me" (Frederic), as if thus renouncing in advance any attempt to understand or explain the methods, tasks, and purposes of this fantastic bloc. Thus it seems that somehow I found it necessary in the past to initiate "Frederic" into my alliance with Berlin, but did not initiate him into the meaning of this alliance. In other words, my "frankness" had the single purpose of helping out the G.P.U.

"Frederic" writes further on the same score that "what was called using fascism was direct collabo-

ration with the Gestapo." Not a word on what this collaboration consisted of and precisely how "Frederic" learned about it. In this part "Frederic" follows strictly the shameless methods of Vyshinsky-Yezhov.

8. Then follow accusations of an "internal" order intended to serve as motivation for Klement's break with the Fourth International and with me personally. It is curious that this part of the letter should begin with a reference to my "Bonapartist manners," that is, it seems to return the epithet applied by me to the Stalinist regime. In passing, all the accusations in the trials against the Trotskyites are built on this pattern: Stalin plasters his political opponents with crimes of which he himself is guilty or with the accusations which are advanced against him. Vyshinsky, the G.P.U. and its agents carry out this operation almost automatically. "Frederic" submissively follows the strictly set pattern.

9. The letter further lists all the negative consequences of my "Bonapartist" methods: "In the past," he states, "we were abandoned by such people as Nin, Roman Well, Jacob Frank." The combination of these three names is strange. Roman Well and Jacob Frank openly returned in their time to the Comintern after having attempted for a while to act in our ranks as secret agents of the Comintern. On the contrary, Andres Nin, after his break with us, maintained an independent position, remained hostile to the Comintern and fell victim of the G.P.U. Klement knows this distinction very well. But "Frederic" ignores it or does not know it.

10. "You have delivered the P.O.U.M.," continues "Frederic," "to the mangling of the Stalinists." This phrase is absolutely enigmatic, not to say senseless. Despite the P.O.U.M.'s open break with the Fourth International, the G.P.U. persecuted the members of the P.O.U.M. precisely as if they were Trotskyites; in other words the P.O.U.M. is subjected to "mangling" on the same basis as the adherents of the Fourth International. "Frederic's" enigmatic phrase is apparently dictated by the desire to set against Trotskyism those members of the P.O.U.M. who have not yet been murdered by the G.P.U.

11. The accusations which refer to a later period are of no less false character. "Recently our organisation was abandoned by such people as Sneeveliet and Vereecken, who showed such great political sense and wisdom in the Spanish question" Sneeveliet and Vereecken in reality showed their sympathy for the P.O.U.M., which was accused by the Stalinists of being connected with fascism. Thus it seems that "Frederic" on the one hand

solidarizes himself with the P.O.U.M., Sneevliet and Vereecken; and on the other, repeats the accusations against the opponents of the G.P.U. (among them, consequently, also against the P.O.U.M.) of connections with fascism. It must be added that during the last several years Klement often reproached me in friendly fashion with being too tolerant and patient in regard to Sneevliet and Vereecken. But apparently "Frederic" knows nothing about this.

12. "We were abandoned," he continues, "by Molinier, Jan Bur with his group, Ruth Fischer, Maslov, Brandler, and others." In this list the name of Brandler, who never belonged to the Trotskyite camp but on the contrary was always its irreconcilable and open enemy, strikes the eye immediately. Years of open struggle in which he invariably defended Stalinism against us testify to his animosity. Klement well knew the political figure of Brandler and our attitude toward him. He knew only too well, at the same time, the inner life of the Fourth International. Why did "Frederic" introduce Brandler's name among the people who belonged to our movement and then broke with it? Two explanations are possible. If we grant that the letter was written by Klement, we must assume that he wrote it under the muzzle of a revolver and included Brandler's name in order to show the forced character of his letter. If we proceed from the fact that the letter was forged, the explanation is indicated by the entire technique of the G.P.U., where ignorance is combined with brazenness. In the Moscow trials all opponents of Stalin were thrown into one heap. Among the members of the non-existent "right-Trotskyite" bloc were included not only Bukharin but also Brandler and even Souvarine. In accordance with the same logic Brandler finds himself among people who broke with the Fourth International to which he never belonged.

13. "It is puerile to think," continues "Frederic," "that public opinion will allow itself to be pacified by the simple declaration that they are all agents of the G.P.U." This phrase is even less understandable. None of us have said that Nin and other leaders of the P.O.U.M., being annihilated by the G.P.U., were agents of the G.P.U. This applies as well to the other people mentioned in the letter except Roman Well who through his activity openly distinguished himself in the service of the G.P.U. Klement knew very well that none of us advanced such preposterous accusations against the people listed in the letter. But the whole thing is that "Frederic," in passing attempts to defend the American, Carleton Beals, and other friends and agents of the G.P.U., must consequently compromise the very accusation of connection with the G.P.U. Therefore this clumsy trick by means of which the suspicion is extended—in my name—to such people as evidently it cannot be applied at all. This again is the style of Stalin-Vyshinsky-Yagoda-Yezhov.

14. The name "Beals" is spelled incorrectly in the letter: "Bills." Only a person not familiar with the English spelling could write in such a manner. But Klement knew the English language well, knew the name, Beals, and was very pedantic in spelling out names.

15. The German of the letter is correct; but it seems to me much more primitive and unwieldy than the language of Klement, who possessed stylistic abilities.

16. Worthy of attention, too, is the reference to the forthcoming International Conference, by means of which, I hope, in the words of the letter, "to save the situation" for the Fourth International. In reality, as can be seen from ample correspondence, Klement was the initiator of the Conference and took the most active part in its organization. The G.P.U. insofar as it was aware of the inner affairs of the Fourth International (through the press, internal bulletins, and possibly through secret agents) might have hoped by kidnapping Klement prior to the Conference to stop the organization work and prevent the Conference itself.

17. This same part of the letter contains a reference to the proposal of including Walter Held in the International Secretariat "apparently by orders from over there." In other words the author of the letter wishes to impute that Walter Held is an agent of the Gestapo. The absurdity of this information is apparent to all who know Held. But naturally, casting a shadow upon one of the prominent adherents of the Fourth International is one of the designs of the G.P.U.

18. The letter ends with these words: "I have no wish whatever to come out openly against you: I have had enough of it all, I am tired. I go and leave my place for Walter Held." The falsity of these phrases is absolutely evident. "Frederic" would not have written this letter if he or his masters did not intend in some way or another to utilize it subsequently. In what way? This is not yet apparent. Possibly it may be used in particular in the Barcelona trial held behind closed doors against the "Trotskyites." But possibly too it is for a larger purpose.

* * *

What conclusions follow from the foregoing analysis? At first upon receipt of the letter I had almost no doubt that it was written by Klement's own hand, but in a very nervous condition. My impression is explainable from the fact that I was accustomed to receiving letters from Klement and had never had any reason to question their authenticity. The more I scrutinized the text, however, the more I compared it with his preceding letters, the more I became convinced of the fact that the letter is only a very skilful forgery. The G.P.U.

has no lack of specialists of all kinds. My friend, Diego Rivera, who has the refined eye of a painter does not at all doubt that the handwriting is forged. To solve this question we can and must utilize the services of a handwriting expert.

[Reports received from France, after investigation by handwriting experts, confirm Trotsky's conviction that the letter is a forgery.—Ed.]

If it should be established, as I believe, that the letter is a forgery, all the rest will become clear of itself:

Klement was kidnapped, spirited away, and probably killed. The G.P.U. fabricated the letter, representing Klement as a traitor to the Fourth International, possibly with the aim of shifting responsibility for his murder upon the "Trotskyites."

All this is entirely within the practices of the international gang. I consider this variant the most likely.

At first, as I have already stated, I assumed that the letter was written by Klement—at the point of a revolver or out of fear for the fate of people dear to him; or more correctly, not written but copied from an original placed before him by G.P.U. agents. In case this hypothesis is confirmed, the possibility is not excluded that Klement is still alive and that the G.P.U. in the near future will attempt to extract further "voluntary" confessions from him. "Confessions" of this kind dictate their own reply from public opinion: let Klement, if he is alive, come out openly before the police, before the judicial authorities, or an impartial commission and tell them all he knows. We can predict in advance that the G.P.U. will in no case let Klement out of their hands.

Theoretically a third supposition is possible: namely, that Klement had suddenly radically altered his views and gone over voluntarily to the side of the G.P.U., drawing from this all the practical conclusions, that is, consenting to support all the frame-ups of this institution. One can go even further and assume that Klement has always been a G.P.U. agent. But all the facts, including the letter of July 14, make this hypothesis absolutely inconceivable. Not a few times Klement could have granted the G.P.U. the greatest services so far as it was a question of taking my life, the life of Leon Sedov, or determining the fate of my collaborators and my documents. He had the possibility of coming out openly during the Moscow trials with his "revelations," which in those days at least would have made a much greater impression than now. But during the Moscow trials Klement did what he could to unmask the frame-ups, actively helping Sedov in gathering data. Klement showed great devotion for the movement and a serious theoretical interest in the discussion of debatable questions. To his pen belong a series of articles and letters showing that

he had a very earnest, even ardent attitude toward the programme of the Fourth International. To feign devotion and theoretical interest for a movement for a number of years—is a task more than difficult.

It is just as difficult to accept the hypothesis of a "sudden" turn within the last period. If Klement had voluntarily gone over to the Comintern and the G.P.U., no matter for what reason—he would have had no basis whatsoever for hiding. The above-mentioned Roman Well and Jacob Frank, as well as Senin, the brother of Well, did not at all hide after their "turn"; on the contrary, they came out openly in the press, and Well and Senin (the brothers Sobolevich) have even made a career. Finally, in the case of his voluntarily going over to the side of the Comintern, Klement as a capable and informed person should have written a much more coherent letter without self-evident incongruities and absurdities which any investigating magistrate, any impartial commission, armed with the necessary documents can easily refute.

These are the considerations which led to the conclusion that Klement was kidnapped by the G.P.U. and that his letter to me is a forgery, fabricated by the specialists of the G.P.U. It is very easy to refute this hypothesis: "*Frederic*" must emerge from his hiding place and come out with open accusations. If he will not do this, it means that Klement is in the clutches of the G.P.U., and probably already "liquidated" as have been so many others.

The chief responsibility in solving the mystery of Rudolf Klement's disappearance lies with the French police. Let us hope, no matter how difficult this may be, that they will this time prove themselves more persistent and more successful than they have been in solving all the preceding crimes of the G.P.U. on French soil.

COYOACAN, D.F.

August 3, 1938.

* * *

P.S.—All the above had already been written when I received from Paris a letter by Comrade Rous, dated July 21, each line of which confirms the above conclusions.

1. Rous received a copy of the letter addressed to me, but signed "Rudolf Klement" and "Adolf." Assuming the same signature to be on the original addressed to me, Rous expressed legitimate astonishment over the letter being signed with the name "Adolf" and not "Camille," the signature Klement used during the entire last period. In fighting against the espionage of the G.P.U. and the Gestapo, Klement changed his pseudonyms three times during the last few years in the following order: Frederic,

Adolf, Camille. Obviously, the G.P.U. fell into a trap. Possessing the names: Klement, Frederic, and Adolf, to lend more plausibility they placed on different copies all three of the names (which is absurd in itself), but did not use the only name which Klement actually utilized as his signature during the last period.

2. On July 8, that is five days prior to Klement's disappearance, his portfolio of papers vanished in the subway. It is understood, of course, that the portfolio could not be found. Klement, who well knew that the G.P.U. in Paris acts as if it were in its own home, immediately informed every section of the Fourth International of the theft of the portfolio, suggesting that they cease sending letters to the old addresses.

3. On July 15th, after receiving "Adolf's" letter postmarked Perpignan, the French comrades visited Klement's room. His table was set, everything was in order, not the least sign of preparation for departure! The importance of this circumstance does not need any elucidation.

4. Comrade Rous points out that the address on the letter from Perpignan was written as the Russians write it, first the name of the city, then at the bottom of the envelope the name of the street. It can be considered beyond all doubt that Klement, as a German and a European, never wrote addresses in this manner.

5. Why, asks Rous, is the name "Beals" written as in Russian, "Bills"; in other words, the Russian transliteration of the name is simply written in Latin characters?

Omitting other remarks from Rous' letter (Rous and other French comrades will themselves bring these considerations to the attention of the public and of the French authorities), I shall limit myself now to stating that the first factual information received directly from France fully confirms the conclusions at which I arrived on the basis of the analysis of the letter signed "Frederic"; that is, *Rudolf Klement has been kidnapped by the G.P.U.*

COYOACAN, D.F.

August 4, 1938.

Deadlock in France

The workers of France by means of their militant struggles in the sit-down strikes of two years ago wrested from the bosses the 40 hour week, the sliding scale of wages and paid holidays. Ever since then the efforts of the Popular Front Government and the governments supported by the Popular Front have been concentrated on nibbling at those gains. By means of appeals to patriotism, currency devaluation and, since Daladier came into power, a baffling series of decrees, the workers have been robbed of the greater part of their gains.

The favourite argument of the bosses against the 40-hour week, namely that it placed French industry at a disadvantage in competition with rivals, was exposed last May as fraudulent when the Daladier government announced that it was to inform the Secretary-General of the League of Nations that it did not propose to ratify the International Labour Conference Convention for a 40-hour week. By refusing to advocate the international 40-hour week, the government revealed unequivocally that its sole concern was to restore the old system for the benefit of French capitalism.

The way was prepared by the forerunners of the present regime. Blum and Chautemps cautiously and timidly tinkered at the 40-hour law, but did not dare to proceed openly because they knew that workers' militancy which had erupted in the June strikes still smouldered beneath the surface.

On the fall of Blum's government last April,

Daladier became premier, preaching the gospel of "more work and less politics." Less politics meant the continuation of the hypocritical "non-intervention" in Spain. More work meant a campaign against the 40-hour week. The Socialists headed by Blum supported Daladier and at their Royan conference endorsed his policy of treachery abroad and at home. Pointing to the series of crises in international affairs, Blum solemnly warned against creating a government crisis in France. Covered and supported by the Stalinists as well as the Socialists, Daladier carried out his offensive on workers' conditions by a series of decrees amending the overtime regulations.

On May 20th, the Cabinet decided to substitute a 2,000 hour year for the 40-hour week. Four days later, it decreed the adding of 75 hours overtime to the workers' year to make up for the time lost by holidays. By this manoeuvre, the paid holidays won by the workers in their strike struggles have been wrested back from them in the shape of overtime, and their working week increased. On the same day a decree was promulgated legalising unlimited overtime for workers in the armaments industry, whose 40-hour week has entirely vanished, a sacrifice to the profit-hunger of the armaments magnates.

This was followed up early last month with a decree that added another 75 hours overtime to the machine tool workers' year, thus imposing upon them a 45-hour week, and bringing them nearer to

the conditions imposed on the workers in the arms trade.

The final offensive was opened by Daladier in a broadcast speech on August 21st, when he demanded that the 40-hour week be made "elastic". Nine days later the Council of Ministers authorised unlimited overtime in the "defence" industries and 100 extra hours to the year of workers in the rest of industry.

Amid the confusion of decrees the fact emerges that the French worker's week has now been enlarged to 43½ hours. The 40-hour week has become history.

The onslaught has been carried out by passing off the added hours as "overtime". That there is no need to exact overtime from the French workers is attested by the fact that the current official figures for unemployment in France show an increase in the registered unemployed of nearly 10 per cent. Ignoring the growing army of unemployed, the French capitalists increase the hours of those who are at work. But there remains one last fortress for them to capture.

Since the added hours are still nominally "overtime," the bosses are legally compelled to pay for them, according to the arbitration agreements entered into with the unions, at rates varying from time and a quarter to time and a half. They still possess the power to manipulate the currency, to devalue the franc yet again and so to reduce the real wages of the worker by forcing up the cost of living within the 5 per cent. limit allowed them before the sliding scale comes into operation. But rather than face the storm that must result from another franc devaluation, they prepare an attack on overtime rates of pay. Daladier is preparing a bill to cut overtime rates in the existing arbitration agreements to 10 per cent. instead of the 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. now obtaining. First the week is lengthened by adding "overtime", and now the overtime is to be approximated to ordinary hours—and the 40-hour week week obtained by the magnificent struggle and self-sacrificing solidarity of the French workers, is completely filched away.

The French Popular Front decided on August 26th not to allow the "dispute over the 40-hour week" to threaten their solidarity. In this way the "Socialists" and "Communists" encourage their capitalist partners in the Popular Front to complete the war on workers' conditions. The Front Populaire came into existence as a strike-breaking conspiracy to sidetrack the French workers when they showed by occupying the factories that they were prepared to take the revolutionary path to solve their difficulties. The Front Populaire now completes its treacherous task. The "Socialists" and "Communists", with much windy demagoguery, hold the workers' hands while the bosses rob them of the fruits of their sit-down strikes.

But the temper of the workers is slowly rising to a new crescendo. They will by no means submit passively to be plundered. In the forefront of the defensive struggle of the French workers stand the Marseilles dockers, who clearly recognise the purport of the new "overtime" schemes. Lowest paid of all French dockers, they receive on the average only two-thirds of the wage earned by the dockers at Dunkirk or Sète, and besides this, count themselves lucky to get three days work in the week. They demanded increased wages, with higher rates for Sunday work and nightwork. Their demands refused, they have conducted since the middle of July, an overtime strike, refusing to work over the legal working day. The leadership of the Dockers unions contented themselves with pious declarations of solidarity with the strikers, who were left to carry on their struggle single-handed. To break their strike, the Daladier government sent negro troops to unload ships, under the protection of armed mobile Guards.

The indignation of the dockers along the Mediterranean seafront at the utilisation of government troops and French sailors as strike-breakers threatened to precipitate a general strike throughout the Mediterranean ports and the dockers' fight became the spearhead of the workers' defensive struggle against the encroachments on the 40-hour week.

Once again Leon Blum applied the brakes, declaring that the Socialist party must support the government to the limit, "in view of the international situation." The same old cry!

The government proposed a two-shift system, and it was announced that the strike was settled. The Marseilles strikers, grimly ignoring the new decree, continued to work the old schedule.

Faced with this solid front, the government has made proposals for a final attempt at "conciliation," backing up its proposal with the threat of placing Marseilles under military authority.

The new crisis serves to rally the workers to a determined stand in protection of their hard-won gains. The enemy in front of them they see clearly. But a danger equally great threatens them from the traitors who stand in the ranks of the working class, urging a "strategic retreat" in view of the international situation, in view of Hitler's threats, in view of the attitude of the Radicals. This enemy, the Popular Front and the corrupt politicians who make it, they have only glimpsed. The developing crisis forces these gentlemen of the Front Populaire to come out into the open as advocates of "strategic" retreat and abandonment of material gains for the sake of the abstract fake unity of the Popular Front. No small part of the task of revolutionary socialists in France who are united under the banner of the P.O.I., is to hammer into the consciousness of the workers the true role of the Popular Front traitors.

International Trade Crisis

The "recession" in the United States continues, in spite of minor upward oscillations, in its main trend downwards. As a direct result of the American crisis, there develops rapidly repercussive slumps in those countries which trade with the United States. For example, in South Africa, which looks to the United States as the main market for its diamonds, the export of diamonds has dropped to less than half that of the corresponding month last year, and imports by 15 per cent. The government announces an economy campaign. Similarly Japan has suffered the loss of 29 per cent. of her revenue from silk through the shrinking of the United States market and has as a consequence been compelled to cut purchases of vitally needed American fertiliser by one third. Since Japan's foreign trade depends so largely on the United States, the "recession" coupled with the drain of the war in China has brought Japan to the verge of a severe financial crisis.

Apart from such direct repercussions as these, examples of which could be multiplied indefinitely, there is also the more far-reaching effect of intensified competition for markets which accelerates the headlong drive of the imperialist powers to the world war.

President Roosevelt's declarations on his recent visit to Canada that the United States would not countenance an aggression against Canada means the extension of the Monroe Doctrine to Canada, the protection of the lamb by the wolf. Already deeply penetrated by American capital, Canada is now becoming a battleground of competing British and American imperialism. Britain, which is feeling the pinch of world depression no less keenly than the United States, is forced, in spite of the rising tide of unemployment at home, to place enormous orders for war materials in Canada, stimulating the large scale production of arms and planes, and strengthening trade-links.

The attention of American imperialism has also been directed towards the strengthening of its hold on the South American republics, into which Germany has increasingly penetrated in the past few years by means of barter agreements. Following the unsuccessful fascist uprising in Brazil last May, a drive was initiated against Nazi propaganda in South America culminating in the expulsion of hundreds of German commercial representatives from Brazil. The fact that many of the expelled Germans were

actually anti-Nazi demonstrates that the real object of the drive was to destroy German trade in South America. The rejection by the Bank of Brazil of German "barter" marks, the curtailment of textile dumping, the schemes for setting up processing plant for metal ores in Argentina coupled with the "Dutch-Swiss" bank loan, these are blows directed mainly at Germany, which is being relentlessly forced out of South American markets.

The seizure of Austria opened up a direct road for German goods to the Balkan states, via the Danube. While Germany announces a forthcoming commercial drive to the Balkans, British and French interests are feverishly busy organising diplomatic, financial and trade relations with the countries of South-eastern Europe. Hitler's coming to power, by enslaving the German working class, enabled German imperialism to pour an ever increasing flood of cheap goods into the Danubian countries: Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In the five years of Hitlerism, Germany's trade, both export and import, with these countries has increased greatly; in the case of the last two countries it has doubled and more than doubled.

Even while the contemplated seizure of Austria was being discussed among the diplomats behind the scenes, the counter-moves were being made. The Balkan Entente was won over and the reconciliation completed between Britain and Turkey, lubricated by loans and concessions of territory, during the days when Hitler was preparing his march. In the months that followed, British and French credits have been granted to Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, followed by a wave of liberalism and love for democracy among the rulers of these countries.

The effect of these moves must be that in the coming months German trade in the south-east of Europe will be throttled as it is being throttled in South America.

The sharpening struggle for markets impose upon shaky German economy still heavier burdens. In the intensified competition created by the world slump, it is in Germany that the signs are first visible of the coming economic blizzard. The slump on the Berlin bourse, the increasing foodstuff shortage and lack of raw materials, together with industrial mobilisation now reaching out to absorb women into industry present a situation in which the toiling population finds itself suffering the hardships of the

unemployed while they work a ten-hour day. The series of stock exchange panics point to an approaching paralysis of industry rooted, not in sales of stock by emigrating Jews, but in the growing world depression and the savage struggle for the dwindling world market.

The state of war is permanently imbedded in the present epoch of imperialism. In the period of so-called "peace" it is fought with the weapons of diplomacy, trade agreements, embargoes, dumping duties, but it is none the less deadly for that. But the period is rapidly approaching when the conflicts of contending imperialism can no longer be resolved by these means. The trade war turns to the more violent form, the use of battleships, tanks and bombers as instruments for regulating trade relations and the sharing of markets among rival imperialist powers.

With Germany in the throes of approaching financial debacle, with Japan on the verge of approaching economic ruin, with Italy turning to Jew-baiting as a desperate expedient to stave off mass unrest—

all the materials are present for a new world upheaval. In the so-called "democracies", in spite of the plunder of the last war, the slump assumes every day more menacing proportions. America plunges deeper into the recession, France enters into a new period of crisis, the British lion patiently watches every mousehole to relieve his growing hunger for trade.

For this state of things, the existing system offers no remedy, for war, far from solving the problems, merely dams them up, and they reappear in even more devastating form, as the last world war showed.

Imperialism is unending horror, mass famine today, mass mutilation and death to-morrow. International trade conferences and military staff talks are compounded of the same material—imperialism. To end war and the preparing of wars it is necessary to end capitalism, a task which only the international working class can accomplish by the forceful overthrow of the bourgeoisie in each country by the workers of that country. Civil war, workers against exploiters, is the only road to peace.

Race Riots in Burma

by THAN TUN

This pen-picture of last month's events in Burma by an eyewitness demonstrates once again the imperialist stratagem of diverting into the channel of race riots the growing exasperation of colonial workers whose burdens daily increase. The strike of oilworkers in the Burma Oil Co.'s fields a few weeks ago is symptomatic of the rising tide of discontent which is welding Burmese workers together in common defence of their class interests. The struggles of the colonial workers must be linked with those of the British workers in a united front against the common enemy, British Imperialism, which throws white against coloured, Moslem against Hindu, Arab against Jew, to preserve its own domination—Ed.

Communalism, the imperialist reaction to the rising tempo of the masses, is in fact the barometer of class-consciousness.

Imperialism gives birth to its own antithesis, the movement for national liberation among the colonial countries and the social revolutionary movement of the working-class. Unable to find a solution of its own contradictions, it adopts the policy of *divide et impera* in the colonies, accompanied by brutal repression.

Communalism is a phenomenon hitherto unknown to Burma. Burmans are known abroad as hospitable people and as such, they are friendly to foreigners, especially to Indians to whose country Burma owes her cultural heritage. Racial hatred against Indians was a thing unheard of in Burma. Prior to 1930, Indians had even taken part in the movement for political independence. The Burmans on their part, also had demonstrated their solidarity with the Indian struggle for freedom.

In 1930, the dock workers, all South Indians, went on strike in connection with wages. There was a shortage of hands and the stevedores took in Burmans. Incited by interested parties, the strikers assaulted the Burmese and a fracas took place. The trouble soon assumed the form of communal riots, which spread all over the city. When normal conditions were restored, social relations between the two communities were strained.

Since then, Dhobama Asi-Ayone, a nationalist organisation with socialist tendencies, the vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle in Burma, have made various attempts to bring the two communities together.

Now Dhobama Asi-Ayone, has widened its scope by including the Indian masses. In all the workers' struggles under the leadership of Dhobama Asi-Ayone, the Indian workers are fighting side by side with their Burmese comrades.

Can Imperialism tolerate the growing solidarity of the Indians and the Burmans?

The answer is found in the communal riots which took place in the last week of July in Rangoon and which soon spread to all parts of the country, with military excesses such as indiscriminate firing and the ruthless suppression of the Burmese newspapers.

In 1936, a book written by a Burmese Moslem was published. In it, scathing attacks were made on Buddhism and Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, was furiously denounced. But the book was privately circulated amongst the Moslems and it escaped the notice of the Buddhists.

Early in July this year, someone found the book and sent extracts to the Burmese Press. The extracts roused the indignation of the Buddhists to boiling-point and there was a nation-wide protest against the book.

Yet the imperialist Government which has been jailing many anti-imperialists for making alleged seditious speeches, for making speeches alleged to create hatred among different classes of His Majesty's subjects, this government which warned '*New Burma*', a nationalist paper published in English, for writing an 'Inflammatory Editorial' entitled 'Warning to the Capitalists' connived at the mischief already done and allowed it to grow.

On 26th July, a meeting was held at Shwedagon Pagoda. More than ten thousand Buddhists attended the meeting. Resolutions condemning the author and asking the Government to take immediate action were passed. The meeting then decided to stage a demonstration in the Sooratee Burmah Bazaar, where there are Moslems.

The imperialist government, which had banned various demonstrations and which had applied section 144 of Cr. P.C. in the Oilfields, did not do anything to avert the impending clash.

Nearing the bazaar, the demonstrators shouted fiery slogans. A stone was thrown into their midst and the demonstrators retaliated by throwing stones at the Indian shops.

Without trying to find out the mischief-mongers, the European Sergeants began to give lathis blows to the phongyis (Buddhist priests) who were doing their best to pacify the already infuriated mob.

The indignation of the people was now directed against the police force. Policemen found isolated were assaulted or killed.

On the next day, the police excesses were reported

in the press and the whole Burmese press condemned the action of the police.

Only then did the Government decide to prosecute the author and issue a Burma Gazette Extraordinary proscribing the book and relevant pamphlets. It even promised to institute an enquiry into the police excesses.

There were street fights, stray assaults, looting and hooliganism all round. Schools, shops, bazaars, offices, and courthouses were closed down. Buses, trams and rickshaws stopped running and there was no traffic for four or five days. There was no delivery of letters or telegrams. All forms of communications were paralysed. The whole city was panic-stricken.

The rioters distributed their gains fairly and squarely among their comrades. All the spoils of the 'Civil War' were carried away in carts, gharries and lorries in broad daylight, right in the presence of the authorities.

It seems the riot had lost its religious or communal character. Although the riot was still wearing the cloak of communalism, stark want and poverty, growing economic discontent and appalling unemployment, appeared in their nakedness behind this hooliganism.

Military forces had to be called in. Martial law was proclaimed and any group of five persons would be fired upon and any person found assaulting another or looting would be shot dead. After the promulgation of Martial law, crowds were fired upon and many were killed.

Official figures stated there were more than three hundred injured and sixty killed. But it is believed that there were more casualties than stated by official figures.

The military forces exceeded their duty. Indiscriminate firing followed. In some places, people were fired upon without warning. Children going to buy tea from tea-shops were shot.

In order to hide its own inefficiency to cope with the disturbances and to cover up the excesses of the police and the military forces, the imperialist government put the whole blame on the Burmese Press and began to lay its heavy hand on the Burmese dailies.

The District Magistrate issued an order on the 28th prohibiting the publication of articles and news in connection with the present disturbances likely in any way to cause feelings of enmity between different sections or classes or any photograph without the permission given in writing by the Home Department of Government.

The *Sun* and the *New Light of Burma* stopped publication for two days as a protest against the dictatorial order of the District Magistrate.

On the 31st newspapers appeared on the scene again. When the news spread to the districts, the trouble got aggravated, although the situation at Rangoon appeared to be normal.

Meetings were prohibited in the districts. Assaults, looting and burnings went on. Many suspected of inciting the mob were arrested. Section 144 of Cr. P.C. was applied and Martial Law was proclaimed in many districts.

The District Magistrate banned the publication of the *Sun* on 2nd August and of *Progress* on the 3rd. At the same time, the Home Department of the Government demanded Rs. 3000/- as security

from each. The *New Light of Burma* was given a final warning. All the mofussil editions of the Burmese dailies were confiscated by the police.

Yet, the disturbances do not show any sign of abating.

The Government, which connived at the trouble from the beginning and took military measures only when the trouble was at its height is responsible for this state of affairs. It is responsible for causing feelings of enmity between different classes of His Majesty's subjects. It is responsible for the growing economic discontent of the masses expressed in hooliganism. It is responsible for the excesses of the police and military forces.

LEON TROTSKY :

Leon Sedoff Murdered ?

A LETTER TO THE FRENCH COURT

To M. Penegal, Examining Magistrate of the Inferior Court—Department of the Seine.
Monsieur le Juge, Sir:

This morning I received from my attorneys, Maitres Rosenthal and Rous, materials relating to the preliminary investigation and the medical findings on the death of my son, Leon Sedoff. In so important and tragic a case I deem it my right to speak with complete frankness, without any diplomatic subterfuges. The transmitted documents have astonished me by their reticences. The police investigation, as well as the medical experts' report, is obviously pursuing the line of least resistance. In this way the truth cannot be revealed.

Messrs. medical experts arrive at the conclusion that Sedoff's death may be explained by natural causes. This conclusion, in the given circumstances, is almost void of meaning. Any sickness may *under certain conditions* lead to death. On the other hand, there is no sickness or almost none that must necessarily result in death exactly at a given moment. The judicial investigation is not faced with a theoretical question of whether a given sickness could of itself have resulted in death but rather with a practical question of whether somebody had deliberately aggravated the sickness in order to do away with Sedoff as quickly as possible.

During the Bukharin-Rykov trial this year in Moscow, it was revealed with cynical frankness that

one of the methods of the G.P.U. is to assist a disease in expediting death. The former head of the G.P.U., Menzhinsky, and the writer Gorky were not young and were ill; their death, consequently, might have been readily explained by "natural causes." That is what the official findings of the physicians originally declared. However, from the Moscow judicial trials mankind learned that the shining lights of the Moscow medical world under the guidance of the former head of the secret police, Yagoda, had hastened the death of sick people by means of methods that either are not subject to or are very difficult of detection. From the standpoint of the question that concerns us it is almost a matter of indifference whether the testimony of the accused was truthful or false in the particular concrete instances. It suffices that secret methods of poisoning, spreading infection, causing chills, and generally expediting death are included in the arsenal of the G.P.U. Without going into further details, I take the liberty of calling your attention to the verbatim report of the Bukharin-Rykov trial published by the Soviet Commissariat of Justice.

Messrs. experts declare that death "might have" also resulted from natural causes. Of course, it might have. However, as is evident from all the circumstances of the case none of the physicians expected Sedoff's death. It is clear that the G.P.U. itself, trailing every step of Sedoff's, could not have pinned its hopes on the possibility that "natural

causes" would accomplish their work of destruction without extraneous assistance. Meanwhile, Sedoff's illness and his surgical operation offered exceptionally favourable conditions for an intervention of the G.P.U.

My attorneys have placed at your disposal, Monsieur le Juge, all the necessary data proving that the G.P.U. considered the extermination of Sedoff as one of its most important tasks. Generally speaking, French judicial authorities can hardly entertain any doubts on this score, following the three Moscow trials and especially after the revelations made by the Swiss and French police in connection with the murder of Ignace Reiss. For a long period of time, and especially for the last two years, Sedoff lived in a constant state of siege by a G.P.U. gang which operates on Parisian territory almost as freely as in Moscow. Hired assassins had prepared a trap for Sedoff at Mulhouse similar in all respects to the trap to which Reiss fell victim. Only chance saved Sedoff on that occasion. The names of the criminals and their roles are known to you Monsieur le Juge, and I do not need to dwell on this point.

On February 4, 1937, Sedoff published an article in the French periodical, *Confessions*, in which he warned that he was in excellent health; that his spirit had not been broken by the persecutions; that he inclined neither to despair nor suicide and should death suddenly strike him, those responsible for it must be sought in Stalin's camp. This issue of *Confessions* I forwarded to Paris to be placed in your hands, Monsieur le Juge, and that is why I am quoting from memory. Sedoff's prophetic warning, flowing from unimpeachable and universally known facts of a historic magnitude, should, in my opinion, have determined the course and character of the judicial investigation. The conspiracy of the G.P.U. to shoot, strangle, drown, poison or infect Sedoff was a constant and basic fact in the last two years of his life. His sickness was only an episode. Even in the hospital, Sedoff was compelled to register under a fictitious name of Martin, in order thus to render more difficult, if only partially, the work of the bandits who were dogging his steps. In these conditions justice has no right to mollify itself with an abstract formula: "Sedoff *might have* died from natural causes," so long as the contrary has not been established, namely that the powerful G.P.U. had let slip a favourable opportunity to aid the "natural causes."

NO ORDINARY CASE

It may be argued that the above-developed considerations, however weighty in themselves, cannot alter the negative results of expert medical examination. I reserve the right to return to this question in a special document, after a consultation with competent physicians. That no traces of poison were found does not imply that no poisoning took place,

and in any case it does not imply that the G.P.U. did not resort to some other measures to prevent the organism, after an operation, from overcoming the illness. If in question here were an ordinary case, under normal living conditions, then the findings of medical experts, while not exhausting the question, would have preserved their full force of conviction. But we have before us a case quite out of the ordinary, namely, a death, unexpected by the physicians themselves, of an isolated exile, following a prolonged duel between him and a mighty state machine armed with inexhaustible material, technical and scientific resources.

The formal medical examination is all the more inadequate because it stubbornly overlooks the central moment in the history of the illness. The first four days after the operation were days of obvious improvement in the health of the operated patient, whose condition was considered so favourable that the hospital administration discharged the special nurse. Yet on the night of February 14, the patient, left to himself, was found wandering nude and in a state of wild delirium through the corridors and premises of the hospital. Doesn't this monstrous fact merit the attention of the experts?

LEFT UNATTENDED

If natural causes must have (*must have*, not *might have*) led to the tragic denouement, then by what and how explain the optimism of the physicians, owing to which the patient was left completely unattended at the most critical moment? It is of course possible to try to reduce the whole case to an error of prognosis and poor medical care. However, in the materials of the investigation there is not even a mention of it. It is not difficult to understand why: if there was inadequate supervision, then does not the conclusion force itself automatically that his enemies, who never lost sight of Sedoff, could have utilized this favourable situation for their criminal ends?

The staff of the clinic made an attempt, it is true, to list those who had come in contact with the sick man. But what value have these testimonies, if the patient had the opportunity, unknown to the staff, of leaving his bed and room, and wandering without hindrance on anybody's part, through the hospital building in a condition of delirious exaltation.

TURN UNEXPECTED

At all events, M. Thalheimer, the surgeon who operated on Sedoff, was taken unawares by the events of the fatal night. He asked Sedoff's wife, Jeanne Martin de Pallieres: "Hasn't the patient tried to commit suicide?" To this question, which cannot be deleted from the general history of the sickness, Sedoff himself had supplied an answer in advance in the above cited article, a year prior to his death. The turn for the worse in the patient's

condition was so sudden and unexpected, that the surgeon who was acquainted neither with the identity of the sick man nor with the conditions of his life, found himself compelled to resort to the hypothesis of suicide. This fact, I repeat, cannot be deleted from the general picture of the illness and death of my son! One might, if one were inclined, say that the suspicions of Sedoff's relatives and intimates arise from their apprehensiveness. But we have before us a physician, for whom Sedoff was an ordinary patient, an unknown engineer by the name of Martin. Consequently the surgeon could not have been infected with either apprehensiveness or political bias. He guided himself solely by those symptoms which came from the organism of the sick man. And the first reaction of this eminent and experienced physician to the unexpected, *i.e.*, unaccounted for by any "natural causes," turn in the cause was to suspect an attempt at suicide on the part of the patient. Isn't it clear, isn't it most palpably evident that had the surgeon known at that moment the identity of his patient and the conditions of his life he would instantly have asked: "Couldn't this be the work of assassins?"

This is precisely the question that is posed in all its force before the judicial investigation. The question is formulated, Monsieur le Juge, not by myself but by the surgeon Thalheimer, even if involuntarily. And to this question I find no answer at all in the materials of the preliminary investigation forwarded to me. I do not find even an attempt to seek an answer. I find no interest in the very question itself.

Truly astonishing is the fact that the enigma of the crucial night has remained thus far not only unexplained but even unprobed. That time is allowed to lapse, rendering extremely difficult the work of any subsequent investigation, cannot be explained away as an accident. The administration of the clinic has naturally tried to avoid any investigation of this point, for it could not fail to bring to light gross negligence owing to which a gravely sick man was left without any attendance and could have committed acts fatal to himself or could *have been subjected* to such acts. The doctors-experts, for their part, did not at all insist upon clarifying the events of the tragic night. The police investigation was confined to superficial despositions of individuals who were guilty at least of negligence and therefore interested in covering it up. Yet behind the negligence of some might have easily lurked the criminal will of others.

X IS KNOWN

French jurisprudence follows the formula for investigation "against X." Under this very formula

the investigation is now being conducted into the death of Sedoff. But X in this case does not at all remain an "unknown", in the literal sense of the term. It is not a question of a chance cut-throat who murders a wayfarer on a highway, and vanishes after the murder. It is a question of a very definite international gang which has already committed more than one crime on the territory of France, and which makes use of and cloaks itself with friendly diplomatic relations. That is the real reason why the investigation of the theft of my archives, of the persecutions of Sedoff, of the attempt to kill him at Mulhouse, and, finally, why the present investigation of Sedoff's death, which has already lasted five months, have brought and are bringing no results. Seeking to avoid being involved in the completely real and powerful political factors and forces behind the crime, the investigation proceeds from a fiction that in question here is a simple episode of a private life; it labels the criminal X and—fails to find him.

The criminals will be exposed, Monsieur le Juge: The radius of the crime is far too great, far too great a number of people and interests often contradictory to each other have been drawn into it: the revelations have already begun, and they will disclose that the threads of a series of crimes lead to the G.P.U. and, through the G.P.U., directly to Stalin. I cannot tell whether French justice will take an active part in these disclosures. I would heartily welcome it, and am prepared for my part to do everything in my power to assist. But, in one way or another, the truth will be discovered!

From the above it follows quite obviously that the investigation into the death of Sedoff has hardly begun as yet. In consideration of all the circumstances in the case and the prophetic words written by Sedoff himself on February 4, 1937, the investigation cannot but proceed from the assumption that the death was of a violent character. The organisers of the crime were G.P.U. agents, the fake functionaries of Soviet institutions in Paris. The perpetrators were the agents of these agents recruited from among the White emigres, French or foreign Stalinists and so on. The G.P.U. could not fail to have its agents in a Russian clinic in Paris or among circles closest to it. Such are the paths along which the investigation must proceed, if it, as I should like to hope, seeks to uncover the crime, and not to pursue the line of least resistance.

I remain, Monsieur le Juge,
most sincerely yours,

LEON TROTSKY.

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Coyoacan, Mexico.

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